

**Physicians Should Read Doctor Steele's Reports on the Santa Barbara Cases.**—Attention is called to an article by Doctor Meyer printed on page 260, in which the incidence of psittacosis among wild birds of the psittacine family in Australia is discussed; and we conclude our own comments by calling attention to a memorandum received from Doctor Meyer, and which we have appended in the nature of a discussion to the paper sent in by Doctor Steele—wherein it will be noted that Doctor Meyer declares his belief, that "the importation of Central American Amazon parrots into California should be prohibited."

It is to be hoped that members of the California Medical Association will avail themselves of the opportunity to read the case reports submitted by Doctor Steele, because psittacosis is a disease that may be easily confused with other conditions, and the symptoms and signs should be known by all physicians, so that when sporadic instances of the disease do occur, they can be recognized.

### AMBULANCE CHASING

**"Ambulance Chasing": An Unethical Conduct in Legal and Medical Professions.**—An example of "ambulance chasing" which, in some communities is an evil that has grown with all the vigor of rank weeds, is afforded when an unethical attorney and a code-violating physician, having mutual understanding to secure professional work for themselves, directly or indirectly approach citizens who have met with accidents. As "cappers" or "steerers," the two professional representatives often aid and abet one another in their efforts, and encourage the accident victims to file suits for damages, on the ground of real or exaggerated disabilities.

It is interesting to note that the organized legal profession of California recognizes the menace to the ethics of the profession of law that comes into play when "ambulance chasers" are operating, and that recently steps have been taken to investigate and penalize members of its profession who are guilty of such practice.

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**Action of the California State Bar Association.**—The following article, from the Los Angeles *Herald-Express* of September 5, sheds further light upon what is being done by the California State Bar Association. The action of the State Bar Association has the approval of organized medicine, as represented by the California Medical Association and its component county society units:

#### CALIFORNIA BAR WARS ON "AMBULANCE CHASERS"

A state-wide "clean-up" of the ranks of attorneys was under way today, under the leadership of the State Bar Association, and following the admonition given to lawyers at the recent convention here of the American Bar Association to "clean their own house."

First result was the arrest of an alleged "ambulance chaser," and it was indicated that elimination of ambulance chasing would be the first objective of the drive.

Ambulance chasing is the practice of soliciting lawsuits from victims of accidents.

Investigators for the State Bar Association will speed to the scene of every accident, it was reported, to catch the ambulance chasers in the act of soliciting business. When this is impractical, the investigators will interview accident victims to see if they have been solicited by ambulance chasers on behalf of lawyer-employers, and in such cases will endeavor to prosecute.

Attorney Philbrick McCoy is handling the campaign for the Bar Association, and cooperation is being extended by the city prosecutor's office through Prosecutor Newton Kendall and Deputies J. W. Joos and John Concannon.

**Other State Association and Component County Society News.**—Additional news concerning the activities and work of the California Medical Association and its component county medical societies is printed in this issue, commencing on page 301.

## EDITORIAL COMMENT<sup>†</sup>

### CORTIN IN GLAUCOMA

In the July 19, 1935 issue of *Science*,<sup>1</sup> an article appeared from the pen of E. M. Josephson, M. D., of New York City in which he described the successful treatment of chronic simple glaucoma with cortin, an extract from the cortex of the suprarenal gland. A résumé of this article appeared shortly afterward in *Time*, and I believe there has been some mention of the article in the newspapers. I presume all oculists who saw any of these articles shared my mingled feelings of interest and skepticism. I immediately wrote to Doctor Josephson for more details about the treatment, and while I did not receive a personal reply, I did receive a one-page reprint from the *Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Monthly* of January, 1935, in which he described the successful treatment of one case of chronic simple glaucoma with the substance. No details of the method of administration or dosage were given.

At about the time the articles in the lay press appeared, I had under my care an Italian woman of thirty-five, who had been referred to me by Dr. Sterling Bunnell. She had had a severe tonsillitis and sinusitis, which were followed by a bilateral iritis complicated by secondary glaucoma.

Examination of the nose and throat by Dr. Harold Fletcher revealed hypertrophied and inflamed tonsils. Both antra contained pus, but the other nasal accessory sinuses were apparently not much involved or had cleared up. Repeated lavage of the antra did little to relieve the eye condition. One pupil had previously been dilated with atropin; the other had not. The intraocular tension in both eyes varied between 50 and 60 on the Mc-

<sup>†</sup>This department of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE presents editorial comment by contributing members on items of medical progress, science and practice, and on topics from recent medical books or journals. An invitation is extended to all members of the California and Nevada Medical Associations to submit brief editorial discussions suitable for publication in this department. No presentations should be over five hundred words in length.

1 *Science*, vol. 82, p. 62.